OMRI DAILY DIGEST
No. 18, Part I, 25 January 1995

SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER IN LITHUANIA. Lena Hjelm-Wallem, in Vilnius for a two-day visit, met with President Algirdas Brazauskas, Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius, Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys, and members of the parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee on 24 January, BNS reported. The talks focused on the eastward expansion of the European Union, Sweden's possible role in assisting Lithuania become an associate member, and dropping visa requirements between the two countries. The two foreign ministers signed an agreement on mutual assistance in customs activities. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

BELARUS PRIME MINISTER VISITS LATVIA. Mikhail Chyhir held talks in Riga on 23 January with his Latvian counterpart, Maris Gailis, President Guntis Ulmanis, Saeima Deputy Chairman Aivars Berkis, and Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs, BNS reported on 24 January. The meetings focused on expanding economic cooperation. Belarus wants to use Latvian ports for imports and exports and is ready to lower customs tariffs to increase Latvia's transit cargo through Belarus. The two prime ministers signed a joint communique that envisages agreements on mutual protection of investments; avoidance of double taxation; cooperation in education, culture, and science; pensions; and national minority rights. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

CZECH DEFENSE MINISTER IN LATVIA. Vilem Holan, on a visit to Latvia, toured the National Defense Academy in Riga and held talks with its director, Valdis Matiss, BNS reported on 23 January. He also brought weapons--mainly anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns --worth about 2 million Czech koruny. Latvian Defense Minister Jan Trapans noted that Czech specialists will assist in setting up the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion and improving Latvia's military draft legislation. Holan also held talks with Prime Minister Maris Gailis and parliament Defense and Interior Affairs Committee Chairman Andris Ligotnis. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.